

22

FIRST SERIES  
OF  
TESTIMONIALS

IN FAVOUR OF

J. ALFRED WANKLYN,  
M.R.C.S., Lond. ; F.R.S.E., &c.,

DEMONSTRATOR OF CHEMISTRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH,

AS

CANDIDATE FOR THE CHAIR OF CHEMISTRY IN THE  
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN.





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# TESTIMONIALS.

## FIRST SERIES.

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I.—From Dr LYON PLAYFAIR, C.B., F.R.S., L. & E., formerly President of the Chemical Society of London, and now Vice-President: Officer of the Legion of Honour. Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh.

University of Edinburgh,  
8th January 1862.

I have much pleasure in testifying the high opinion which I entertain of Mr Wanklyn as a chemist. I was, in fact, so much struck with the originality and importance of his Chemical Researches, that, after having satisfied myself as to his personal qualifications, I offered to him his present position of Demonstrator to the Chemical Class in this University without having seen him. I have had no reason to regret the choice thus made.

Mr Wanklyn possesses an essential requisite to the holding of a chair in a science which is in an active state of transformation. He is himself an original investigator, and must of necessity keep himself thoroughly acquainted with all the important processes of research necessary to be employed in the prosecution of scientific investigation.

I need only refer to his beautiful labours in the Synthesis of Organic Bodies, some of which, formerly considered as the sole product of vital action, or of complex organic transformation, he has made artificially in the laboratory.

Mr Wanklyn has had the exclusive charge of the Practical Classes, and has also, twice a-week, taught a Tutorial Class of the Students who attend my Lectures. His Students come under me for examination, and I have always been fully satisfied with their progress.

I have never heard Mr Wanklyn lecture, but I was so fully satisfied of his capabilities in this respect, that, during an unavoidable absence from my Class, I employed him to lecture for me, and he fulfilled this duty entirely to the satisfaction of my Students and of myself.

I am not called upon to make any comparison between Mr Wanklyn and other Candidates for the Chair of Aberdeen, but I may state my general conviction, that his important and successful labours entitle him to look for a Chair in any University.

(Signed) LYON PLAYFAIR.

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II.—From ROBERT BUNSEN, Hon. F.R.S., Professor of Chemistry in the University of Heidelberg, Discoverer of the two new Metals, Cæsium and Rubidium, &c.

Herr J. A. Wanklyn, der sich unter den Bewerbern um die neuerdings in Aberdeen erledigte Professur der Chemie befindet, hat mich um ein gutachtliches Urtheil über seine wissenschaftlichen Arbeiten ersucht.

Indem ich diesen Ersuchen mit Vergnügen entspreche, erfülle ich damit nur eine Pflicht, die ich eben so sehr Hrn. Wanklyn persönlich als der Wissenschaft überhaupt schuldig bin, um so mehr als ich Hrn. Wanklyn von früher herunter die Zahl meiner ausgezeichnetsten und talentvollsten Schüler rechne.

Die Untersuchungen, durch welche derselbe seinen Namen in der Wissenschaft bekannt gemacht hat, zeugen von einem besonderen Scharfsinn und einer Gewandtheit in der Lösung schwieriger experimenteller Probleme, wie



sie nur wenigen Chemikern eigen ist. Mehrere der von Herrn Wanklyn ausgeführten Arbeiten namentlich über die von ihm entdeckten merkwürdigen Verbindungen von Alkoholradicalen mit Alkalimetallen, so wie über die directe Bildung der Propionsäure and Essigsäure aus Kohlensäure und jenen Verbindungen sind von hohem wissenschaftlichen Interesse gewesen und zählen zu den ausgezeichnetsten, welche die organische Chemie in neuerer Zeit aufzuweisen gehabt hat.

Ich glaube daher dass Herr Wanklyn der Hochschule; welche ihn als Forscher und Lehrer gewinnt, zur besonderen Zierde und zum grössten Nutzen gereichen wird.

R. W. BUNSEN,  
Professor der Chemie.

Heidelberg, d. 6ten Januar 1862.

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*(Translation.)*

Mr J. A. Wanklyn, who is one of the candidates for the Professorship of Chemistry, just fallen vacant in Aberdeen, has asked me for a commendation (gutachtliches Urtheil) of his scientific labours.

Whilst gladly complying with this request, I am only fulfilling a duty which I owe both to Mr Wanklyn and to science, inasmuch as I consider Mr Wanklyn to have been one of the most distinguished and talented of my pupils. The researches, whereby he has made his name known in science, bear witness to a rare penetration and dexterity in the solution of difficult experimental problems, such as is possessed by only few chemists.

Many of Mr Wanklyn's results—in particular his discovery of the remarkable compounds of the Alcohol radicals with the Alkali-metals, and also of the direct formation of Propionic Acid and Acetic Acid by the action of Carbonic Acid upon those compounds are of high scientific interest,

and count amongst the most remarkable facts with which Organic Chemistry has of late years been enriched.

I believe, therefore, that, to the University which secures him as an Investigator and Teacher, Mr Wanklyn will prove an ornament and an advantage.

(Signed)

R. W. BUNSEN.

Professor of Chemistry.

Heidelberg, 6th January, 1862.

III.—From Dr EDWARD FRANKLAND, F.R.S., Professor of Chemistry at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London. Author of Researches on the Isolation of Organic Radicals, &c.

Chemical Theatre, St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

London, January 8, 1862.

MY DEAR WANKLYN,

I respond with pleasure to your request for an expression of my opinion of your qualifications for the vacant Chair of Chemistry at the University of Aberdeen.

One of the most important requisites in a Professor holding such an important position, is the power of adding to the stock of Chemical knowledge by his own original researches. This power you possess in a very high degree. Your discovery of the compounds of the Alcohol-radicals with Potassium, Sodium and Cadmium, is highly valued by Chemists; but your success in performing the Synthesis of Propionic Acid from Carbonic Acid and Sodium-ethyl, is undoubtedly one of the most important of the recent contributions to Organic Chemistry.

The research which, in conjunction with Professor Playfair, you made upon the densities of vapours, proves that you are capable of employing with success some of the most refined methods of Chemical research.

As my pupil, and subsequently as my assistant, you exhibited such qualities of mind as led me to entertain hopes



of your success, which have not been disappointed. I have now known you for a period of seven years, and have had, during the whole of that time, occasion to admire the zeal, industry, and perseverance with which you have attacked some of the most difficult subjects of chemical enquiry.

You also possess the next great qualification in a Teacher—that of being able to communicate his knowledge to others in a clear and intelligible manner. Your practical acquaintance with this department of professional duty, and your long sojourn in the Laboratories of England, Scotland, and Germany, ensure your acquaintance with the best methods of teaching.

In conclusion, I can only express a hope that you may obtain the Chair, for which you are in every respect so well qualified, and thus acquire a position in which your zeal for the science will find a suitable field for its further development.

Believe me, yours sincerely,

E. FRANKLAND.

IV.—From A. W. HOFMANN, L.L.D., F.R.S., Corresponding Member of Royal Academy, Turin; of the Batavian Society; Vice-President of the Chemical Society.

Royal College of Chemistry,  
January 6, 1862.

DEAR SIR,

I have great pleasure in testifying to the high position which, by your beautiful investigations, you have established among chemical enquirers.

I remain, Dear Sir, yours very truly,

A. W. HOFMANN.

J. A. WANKLYN, Esq.

V.—From W. ODLING, M.B., F.R.S., Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians; Secretary to the Chemical Society; and Professor of Practical Chemistry at Guy's Hospital. Author of a Manual of Chemistry on the Unitary System.

Guy's Hospital, January 4, 1862.

For several years past Mr Wanklyn has devoted himself to chemical investigations with an untiring zeal, and an almost unparalleled success. His skilful researches on some of the most recondite of chemical phenomena, form the best evidence of his high qualifications as a scientific chemist.

(Signed) WM. ODLING.

VI.—From WILLIAM ALLEN MILLER, LL.D., M.D., Professor of Chemistry in King's College, London.

King's College, London,  
January 6, 1862.

MY DEAR SIR,

You are so well known as an original investigator, especially by your researches upon sodium-ethyl, and the conversion of carbonic into acetic and propionic acids; and your experience as a teacher at the University of Edinburgh has given you such advantages in acquiring facility in imparting knowledge to others, that I can have no hesitation in expressing my conviction that you would worthily fill the Chair of Chemistry at Aberdeen.

Mr Brazier has, however, so long virtually held it that it seems to me it would be only an act of justice to that gentleman if he were elected.

With every good wish, believe me, Dear Sir, very truly yours,

WM. ALLEN MILLER.

J. A. WANKLYN, ESQ.

VII.—From THOMAS ANDERSON, M.D., F.R.S.E., Professor of Chemistry in the University of Glasgow.

University of Glasgow,  
8th January 1862.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have much pleasure in expressing the high opinion I entertain of your qualifications as a scientific chemist. The researches you have published not only indicate a thorough knowledge of chemical science, but show that you possess an original mind, and much analytical skill. Of your qualifications as a teacher, I cannot venture to express an opinion, as I have never had an opportunity of hearing you lecture, but your papers are written in a clear and lucid style, from which I should infer that you possess the power, so important in a teacher, of placing your subject clearly before the Student.

I am, Dear Sir, yours truly,

THOMAS ANDERSON.

J. A. WANKLYN, Esq.

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VIII.—From M. MARCELLIN BERTHELOT, Professor of Organic Chemistry, à l'école de Pharmacie, Author of "Chimie Organique fondée sur la Synthèse."

Paris, 11 Janvier, 1862.

MON CHER MONSIEUR,

Je suis heureux de saisir l'occasion de votre candidature à la chaire d'Aberdeen pour dire en quelle estime je tiens votre personne et vos travaux scientifiques.

Vos découvertes en Chimie Organique et principalement celle de la formation des Acides par le moyen de l'Acide Carbonique me paraissent de la plus grande importance. Ce sont les gages déjà acquis des services que vous êtes appelés à rendre à l'Enseignement et au développement de la science.



Veillez, Monsieur, agréer l'assurance de ma haute considération.

M. BERTHELOT.

A MONSIEUR, MONSIEUR J. A. WANKLYN.

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(*Translation*)

Paris, 11th January, 1862.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am happy to seize the occasion of your being a Candidate for the Chair of Aberdeen, to express my esteem for you personally and for your scientific labours. Your discoveries in Organic Chemistry, and principally that of the formation of the Acids, by means of Carbonic Acid, appear to me to be of the greatest importance.

These are the pledges you have already given, of the services which you are destined to render to the culture and development of Science.

Be pleased Sir, to accept the assurance of my high consideration.

M. BERTHELOT.

To J. A. WANKLYN, Esq.

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IX.—From DR. DEBUS, F.R.S., Lecturer on Chemistry at Queenwood College, Author of a “Discourse on the Polyatomic Alcohols,” read before the Chemical Society.

Queenwood College, Stockbridge, Hants,  
January 13, 1862.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have great pleasure in stating that I consider your discovery of the formation of Propionate of Soda from Carbonic Acid and Ethyl-sodium as one of the first discoveries made in the field of Organic Chemistry

during the last few years; and from this, as well as my knowledge of your other researches, I consider you eminently fitted for the Chair you are seeking.

I remain, very sincerely yours,

H. DEBUS.

J. A. WANKLYN, ESQ.

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X.—From G. B. BUCKTON, F.R.S., Member of the Council of the Royal Society of London. Author of *Memoirs on Organo-Metallic Bodies*, &c.

55 Queen's Gardens, Hyde Park,  
January 13, 1862.

DEAR SIR,

It is with much pleasure that I bear testimony to the interest and important character of your chemical researches.

In following my own investigations, I have often had occasion to consult your published papers, and I have found them both valuably suggestive, and philosophically conducted.

I shall rejoice if, by your success, a wider field for the application of your talent be opened to you.

I remain, Dear Sir, yours faithfully,

G. B. BUCKTON.

J. A. WANKLYN, ESQ.

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XI.—From Dr E. ATKINSON, F.C.S., Lecturer on Experimental Science in Cheltenham College. Author of *Researches on Glycol*.

Having been requested by Mr Wanklyn to express my opinion as to his fitness for the Professorship of Chemistry in the University of Aberdeen, I have great pleasure in complying with that request.



Mr Wanklyn, by his published investigations, has already acquired for himself a high reputation as a chemist, both in this country, and on the Continent. His knowledge of Chemistry is both sound and extensive, and his researches shew great ability, both in their conception and in their experimental execution.

As a lecturer, I have always understood that he is very successful; whilst, from his genial manners and love for his science, he cannot but exercise a favourable impression on those with whom he may come in contact.

Bearing in mind what he has already done, I am bound to think that, in appointing him to the Chair in Aberdeen, the electors will secure the services of a gentleman whose labours will be advantageous to the students, and who will be a credit to the University at large.

(Signed) E. ATKINSON, Ph. D., F.C.S.

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XII—The following is extracted from the “Report of the President and Council of the Chemical Society of London,” read March 30, 1859, before that Society.

“It will be evident from the above list that not only has Chemistry been steadily progressing during the past year, but that contributions of very considerable interest have been made to this Society. The papers of Messrs Perkin and Duppa, and of Dr Ulrich have gone far to establish the position of the glycolic and lactic acids in their relation to the fatty acids of the primary series; while the curious results of Mr Wanklyn, which resulted in the formation of propionic acid from the action of carbonic anhydride upon sodium-ethyl, point out a new mode of transferring compounds from one homologous group to that immediately below it.”

(See the Report in the Journal of the Chemical Society, vol. xii p. 169)

XIII.—Extract from the “Preliminary Report on the Recent Progress and Present State of Organic Chemistry,” by GEORGE C. FOSTER, B.A., F.C.S., read before the Meeting of the “British Association for the Advancement of Science” held at Aberdeen, in September, 1859.

“In conclusion of our account of the recent advances of Organic Chemistry, we may enumerate some of the most important reactions, or methods of transformation, which, within the last four or five years have been shown to be applicable to the compounds of various groups, or which, from their nature appear to be capable of such a general application. They may be divided for this purpose into—(I.) Heterologous transformations, . . . (II.) Homologous transformations, . . . (III.) Isologous transformations.

(I.) Heterologous transformations, . . . (E) The substitution of potassium and sodium for zinc in combination with methyl or ethyl (Wanklyn) . . . (II) Homologous transformations. (A) The combination of carbonic anhydride with the compounds of the alcohol-radicals with alkali-metals, e. g.



Sodium-methyl

Acetate of Sodium.

XIV.—Extract from the “Lehrbuch der Organischen Chemie von DR AUG. KEKULÉ,” o. Professor der Chemie, an der Staatsuniversität zu Gent.

*(Translation)*

“The remarkable discovery just made by Wanklyn, of the formation of Propionic Acid by the action of Carbonic Acid upon Sodium-ethyl shows plainly that in both acids (acetic and propionic) the radicals of Carbonic Acid must exist along with the radical methyl or ethyl.”

See Erste Lieferung, paragraph 260.

*(The second series will partly consist of foreign Testimonials, which it requires some time to collect, and to get correctly printed.)*